have brought this little Bill along, but I did not realise it would cause such a lot of suspicion.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: What a shock you got!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I certainly did not expect it would cause such a lot of suspicion, and when I listened to members trying to relate this amendment to the private Acts under which the trustee companies operate—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I am afraid that statement is not quite in line with fact, you know. All members did not regard it with suspicion.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Some members were doing both.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Not all regarded it with suspicion.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: All right; but some were doing a little of each. I am glad to have a little support from Mr. Wise on this point.

Now, can I just say this finally: The need to tidy the matter up appears to me to be obvious. No difficulty has been experienced, but surely we do not necessarily wait until we get into a difficulty before we tidy something up legally!

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Would it be right to say there has been no difficulty up to the present time?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have just read the minute from one of my officers, which stated that the Master of the Supreme Court knows of no difficulty. The opinion is that it is a good idea to tidy up the apparent ambiguity. I really cannot work out why there is opposition to this.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: There must be some confusion; gross value is gross value. There cannot be a greatest gross value.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I listened to Mr. Medcalf last night, and I thought that Mr. Claughton did also. Mr. Medcalf pointed out, loud and clear, what I had attempted to do. The provision is purely to clarify the situation as it exists, and as it has been practised. The Master of the Supreme Court tells me he does not know of any case where the maximum of 5 per cent. has been permitted. I understand the trustee has to present his account and have it passed, and the rate of commission is set by the court.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Has anyone claimed that he has been unjustly remunerated?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Not that I am aware of, and I think the point is hardly valid; that is, that no-one has complained. The Law Reform Committee of the Law Society has pointed out that there may be some difficulty in the interpretation. What is happening, as I understand the position, is that estates are being administered and trustees are being paid on the greatest gross value—even if that expression is one which is not liked.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: The only variation I see from the present practice is that from time to time the court may allow such portion of the aggregate commission, or percentage allowable under this provision, as it thinks fit.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The commission is being paid on the gross value, at the moment. The Act at present states—and Mr. Baxter made some play on this—that the account must be finalised before the trustee can receive his commission, but there is a proviso, "unless the court otherwise orders." The reason for that, of course, is obvious. As Mr. Medcalf explained last night, a trust may go on for a long time and the trustee might find himself in the position where he is financing the whole operation. If he could not get some relief the trustee could find himself in that position.

I have endeavoured to satisfy members on this point, and I assure them, again, that there is no purpose in imagining that I am doing anything that I should not do. There is no occasion to treat this move with suspicion. The Bill will not give a trustee any more than he is receiving at the moment. It will simply clarify the law which is now considered by lawyers to be ambiguous. If members accept the Bill in those terms we will pass the second reading but, if members will not accept it then no doubt we will discuss the matter further during the Committee stage. With your permission, Mr. President, I do not propose to do that this afternoon.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 5th September, 1968

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. A. Manning) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (16): ON NOTICE

ROAD HAULAGE

Government Competition

1. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Transport:

   Does the Government own and use heavy haulage vehicles in opposition to private hauliers supplying the north-west towns

from the city with general requirements for all types of industry?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

The Western Australian Government Railways do operate a subsidiary road freight service with its own vehicles to Geraldton but not beyond.

The honourable member may be interested in the fact that the Commonwealth Railways operate in South Australia, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory, as a forwarding agent providing customers with a door-to-door service. The Commonwealth Railways carries on its own system and then hires private road carriers to complete the journey where necessary.

Many of the prefabricated accommodation units for the north-west from South Australia were delivered on this basis with the Commonwealth Railways accepting door-to-door responsibility.

SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS

Canning Vale

2. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the uneasiness by constituents in the Canning Vale area regarding the proposed sewage treatment works—

(1) Is he able to guarantee—

(a) that the treatment plant will not break down;

(b) there will be no smell from the effluent disposal site or the treatment plant;

(c) in the event of the treated effluent smelling it will not affect the honey from the honey factory adjoining the site; if not, will the Government compensate the owner of the factory;

(d) there will be no contamination by disease of the ground and of ground water which flows through private property from the discharge site;

(e) that the ground water table will not rise by the addition of 2,000,000 gallons of treated effluent being discharged daily onto this site;

(f) the provision of adequate drainage to cope with this increase?

(2) Is he aware this site is at present already one-third under water and in places two feet deep?

(3) Will he advise why other proposed sewage treatment plants (as published in the *West Australian* of the 28th August, 1968) are at least one mile away from any house or development area?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) (a) No, but adequate safeguards will be provided in the event of a breakdown.

(b) The public has already been informed that there will be no objectionable smell.

(c) Advice received from the Department of Primary Production states that the installation will not adversely affect the honey factory.

(d) Yes.

(e) and (f) The water table will be controlled by drainage.

(2) It is known that the lowest parts of the site are under water.

(3) This is not the case.

COCKBURN SOUND

Silting

3. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Does he know that the drain cut between Lake Richmond and Cockburn Sound is depositing silt at the outlet and inhibiting the use of the jetty by professional fishermen and others in the servicing and refuelling of their boats?

(2) Will his department—

(a) give early attention to preventing further deterioration by silting; and

(b) ensure any adverse effects to the use of the jetty are removed?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) and (b) Yes.

PERTH CITY COUNCIL BY-ELECTION

Voting

4. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

In view of the stated large number of electors—estimated 700—not now eligible to be on the roll but listed on the Perth City Council roll, has any action been taken by the Department of Local

Government to make sure that such persons do not vote at the forthcoming by-election for the East Ward of the Perth City Council?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The Department of Local Government has been assured that the questions listed in section 109 (2) of the Local Government Act will be asked, and, in terms of section 109 (3) of the Act, if a person's answers do not establish his right to vote, he will not be issued with a ballot paper.

5. *This question was postponed.*

RAILWAYS

Homes in Country Centres

6. Mr. McIVER asked the Minister for Railways:

How many railway homes were constructed in country centres in the years 1965-1966 and 1966-1967?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

1965-1966—Katanning 1, Kellerberrin 2.
1966-1967—Koolyanobbing 7.

Superphosphate: Demurrage

7. Mr. McIVER asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is the Railways Department obliged to notify farmers that wagons of superphosphate have arrived at the siding of destination?

(2) How many claims for demurrage were waived arising out of the cartage of superphosphate at all appropriate railway centres during the financial year 1967-1968?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

(1) It is not obligatory, but every effort is made for advice to be given.

(2) 90.

8. *This question was postponed.*

MINERAL ROYALTIES

Review

9. Mr. HARMAN asked the Premier:

(1) Did he announce on the 12th March, 1966, that a review would be made of mineral royalties paid to the Government?

(2) Was a committee formed to undertake this review?

(3) Who were the members of this committee?

(4) What recommendations did the committee make?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) The Chairman of the Mines Advisory Committee (Mr. A. H. Telfer) and the Assistant Under-Treasurer (Mr. L. E. McCarrey).

(4) A considerable amount of research has been undertaken and investigations are continuing.

TIMBER MILLS

Closure

10. Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Forests:

(1) How many timber mills in the southern division of the Forests Department have ceased operations in the last six months?

(2) Is it estimated that other mills will close this year; if so, how many?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

(1) Since the 1st January, 1968—

2 mills closed permanently.

2 mills closed temporarily through lack of orders.

2 mills were destroyed by fire and not rebuilt.

All six were small mills cutting mainly sleepers.

(2) No information available.

GRASS PATCH SCHOOL

Flooding

11. Mr. YOUNG asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware of the serious flooding problem of the school grounds at Grass Patch?

(2) If so, what is being done to—

(a) raise the area of these grounds to disperse surface water;

(b) improve the disposal of septic tank effluent?

(3) Has any consideration been given to the Esperance Shire Council's offer to do this work if the department will reimburse it for the cost?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Lewis) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) A drain is to be graded along the northern boundary to control storm water from the adjacent land. In addition the site is to be raised with four to six inches of gravel to prevent pools forming adjacent to the bitumen area.

(b) No further work is envisaged until the proposal at (a) has been put into operation and evaluated.

(3) The offer by the Esperance Shire Council to undertake this work at a cost of $700 is to be accepted.

CONTAINER SHIPS

Fremantle

12. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the abundance of evidence given to the Senate committee on containerisation that Fremantle would become at an early date a major terminal port, on what premises does the Director of Transport base his recent statement to the contrary?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

The meaning of the word "terminal" in the Senate Select Committee report follows the usage of the two container consortia. In this context a terminal or terminal port is a place where the container vessel berths and where container cranes load and discharge containers. Such terminal ports are located at Fremantle, Melbourne, and Sydney. The work undertaken by the Director-General of Transport aimed at determining whether Fremantle could be mounted as a terminating port for a container service from the U.K.-Continent; that is, a port at which a ship turned around for the return journey after discharging a full load of containers which would then be carried to interstate destinations by rail. The work showed that whilst this was physically possible in so far as the capacity of the Western Australian Government Railways and Commonwealth Railways standard gauge systems are concerned, such a service would not be competitive in terms of cost with that which will be provided by container ships continuing to Sydney and Melbourne from Fremantle. In terms of time such a service would be competitive.

BARRACKS ARCH

Restoration

13. Mr. MAY asked the Premier:

(1) Will he advise if the Government has received any offers of financial assistance by private organisations for the restoration of the Barracks Arch?

(2) If so, would he give particulars of the offers and the organisations concerned?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) and (2) In 1966 the Barracks Defence Council advised that it proposed to commence a public appeal to raise funds to restore the archway.

This appeal did not eventuate.

EDUCATION

Gas Heating in Classrooms

14. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

What conclusions have been reached following experiments by the department to use town and Kleenheat gas units for the heating of classrooms?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Lewis) replied:
Major conclusions reached were—

(a) Gas space heating of classrooms is effective.

(b) Over a full period of eight weeks the average cost per week per classroom was $1.64.

(c) Thermostatic control is necessary for effective and economical usage.

(d) Specially designed units were markedly more efficient than existing convection units which had been converted.

(e) The time taken to bring the rooms to required temperatures was approximately 30 minutes.

PUBLIC SERVANTS

Taxation Concessions

15. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Treasurer:

(1) Can other members of the Public Service, like State school teachers, serve, for example, 22 months of a normal two-year minimum period yet only receive a taxation concession for one year only?

(2) Do others serving up to 11 months, relieving or for any other reason, receive any taxation concession for this period?

(3) If no concessions, will he intercede on a Federal level to ensure that taxation concessions are granted on a *pro rata* basis to teachers and other members of the Public Service on a transfer basis?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) and (2) In order to qualify for a zone allowance an income earner must serve more than six months in the zone in the year of income, i.e., the 1st July to the 30th June. Public servants, like teachers, are treated no differently from any other income earner.

It is possible for an income earner to serve 22 months of a two-year period in a zoned area and receive a zone allowance for one taxation year.

An income earner, serving 11 months in a zoned area, would receive a zone allowance only if he qualified under the conditions set out in the first paragraph above.

(3) See my reply to the member for Kalgoorlie—Item 20, *Votes and Proceedings of Legislative Assembly*, of the 1st August, 1968.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE

Losses

16. Mr. TONKIN asked the Treasurer:

(1) Does the grant which it has been agreed the State will receive in lieu of the special grant consequent upon Western Australia's withdrawal from the Grants Commission cover losses of the State Shipping Service up to the amount of the loss for 1967?

(2) If "Yes," does this imply that if the State Ships are retained and losses in future years are kept within the 1967 amount no burden will be imposed upon Consolidated Revenue from that source?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) The grant the State will receive in lieu of the special grant is about 5 per cent. of the revenue available to the Government for the Consolidated Revenue Fund from which all recurrent expenditure needs, including State Shipping Service losses, must be met. The losses incurred by the service are therefore a continuing burden on the Revenue Fund and can only be met at the expense of other needs.

(2) Answered by (1).

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT NOTICE

ROAD TOLL

Pattern in Other States

1. Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Police:

In view of the fact that the number of deaths on Western Australian roads has risen considerably in 1968, is he in a position to advise if a similar pattern exists in other States; and, if so, can he give details of the position in other States?

Mr. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Craig) replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. A letter has been received from the Tasmanian Minister for Transport advising that great concern is felt over the death toll on the roads in that State because the number of deaths has increased by about 38 per cent. this year over the figures for last year. Correspondence has been forwarded requesting information from other States, but replies are not yet to hand.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE

Losses

2. Mr. TONKIN asked the Treasurer:

This question has reference to his answer to question 16 on today's notice paper, and is being asked to get some clarification. Would not the grant which the State is to receive in lieu of a special grant be equal to the amount received in 1967 which included an amount provided to meet the loss on the State Shipping Service in that year?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I cannot speak for what the Grants Commission would have done in this regard. It is true that the $15,500,000, which was the grant we would have received last year, has now become part of our total grant for the next two years, when a review of the whole formula is made.

I would remind the House that the $2,500,000 loss which was incurred by the State Shipping Service last year—

Mr. Tonkin: $2,370,000.

Mr. BRAND: Well, $2,370,000 or whatever the actual amount was which could have been allowed by the Grants Commission. The fact remains that the total sum we receive at present and that which we will receive in the future will be the amount from which, as I said in the first place, we will meet all our expenditure. It would seem to me that if the sale of the State Shipping Service means we can save money, and still provide and maintain a service similar to the existing one, it is a saving we should endeavour to bring about.

The Grants Commission had set a limit of $2,400,000, I think, on the grant to be made to this State, and has said it would not go above that figure, indicating the commission felt we had involved ourselves in too great a loss in the State Shipping Service at that point of time. That was something we had to consider, and it

is quite possible the Grants Commission, if we had remained a claimant State may have placed an even more severe limit on the grant it would have made to this State to offset the losses which could have been incurred by the State Shipping Service.

The Leader of the Opposition is endeavouring to make the point that in the grant we have at present there is sufficient money to enable us to carry on the State Shipping Service up to a loss of approximately $2,400,000. I think that as Treasurer I should, and the Government should, endeavour to cut that loss by whatever means we can.

Mr. Tonkin: In other words, show a profit out of the service?

Mr. BRAND: No, not show a profit. Surely a Treasurer of a State like Western Australia should save whatever money he possibly can, not because of the desire of the policy or philosophy of any one party to maintain a State Shipping Service, but because if the service can be maintained within reason for the purpose it was first established, and at the same time millions of dollars can be saved, I believe this is what we should do.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tonkin: Not if you saved the money at the expense of the people of the north.

Mr. BRAND: Who said we were saving it at their expense?

Mr. Tonkin: You have not said that you would not.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. A. Manning): Order! This is question time.

Mr. BRAND: We will cross that bridge when we come to it. We have not declared any arrangement or agreement for the sale of the State Shipping Service, but, nevertheless, it is the policy of our Government to believe in private enterprise. It seems to be only too sensible that if the burden can be reduced by providing a similar service, or a service which we ourselves might provide in the future, that is what we ought to do.

COCKBURN SOUND

Silting

3. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Works:

With reference to the answer given to my question 3 on today's notice paper, will the Minister enlarge on it in relation to when this necessary work will be carried out?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The only elaboration I can give to my favourable reply is that some few weeks ago I requested the department to investigate the situation as posed to me in the question asked, with a view to trying to eliminate the silting caused in Mangles Bay. This investigation is proceeding; but I am afraid that at this point of time I cannot let the honourable member know when the actual spade work will begin. The department will proceed to carry out this work, as indicated in the affirmative reply I have given.

ARGENTINE ANT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.

HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 3rd September.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.33 p.m.]: It is most unlikely that the Opposition would voice any opposition to this measure, because it is a step in the right direction; although in my view it is trifling with the situation somewhat, as I shall endeavour to illustrate.

I say the Bill is hardly likely to be opposed from this side of the House, because, in the first place, this legislation was introduced by Labor when it was in office; and, incidentally, it gave a lead to the Commonwealth Government which some half a dozen years later introduced a housing loan guarantee scheme—and this is in operation at the present time. Further, if my memory serves me rightly, I wrote to the Minister asking him to take action along these lines; that is to say, to adjust the figures to conform more with the cost of house construction in these days. He was good enough to agree readily with my proposition. I am pleased, therefore, at this early stage that we have this Bill before us.

No doubt the Minister has perused the papers at the State Housing Commission. If he has done so he will have noticed my original proposition was somewhat along the lines of the proposals in the Bill; namely, that under this legislation it should be possible to allow in all cases an advance or a guarantee up to 95 per cent. of the value of a property. However, in the course of the decisions made at Government level the formula of 95 per cent., 90 per cent., and 80 per cent. appeared in the existing legislation.

In the Bill the Minister has provided different amounts for the respective areas —the metropolitan area, the north-west, and the balance of the State. I consider this to be a reasonable proposition, but I question very much the necessity for his being as niggardly as he proposes to be. I say that advisedly, because the original legislation was passed in 1957, and under its provisions it was possible to grant assistance in respect of houses costing $10,000. Notwithstanding the fairly substantial increases in building costs, it will be seen that the maximum proposed in the Bill is a loan of $10,000 for houses in the metropolitan area in respect of which the guarantee will apply. Therefore there has been a gradual worsening of the position in that area.

It is true that the 95 per cent. formula will apply up to the amount I have mentioned, instead of the scale of 95 per cent., 90 per cent. and 80 per cent. It would be more realistic for the figure of $10,000 to be applied to houses in the metropolitan area to be increased to the vicinity of $15,000; indeed, that amount, with consequential adjustments, should be the rule elsewhere.

I say this because housing is expensive and is becoming increasingly expensive. Contained in houses today are many more elements than were contained in houses built only a few years ago. I am referring to built-in furniture and other refinements. Hot water systems are inevitably installed in houses; double garages are becoming regular features; and all these become part of the dwelling. This, of course, involves no outlay on the part of the Government.

I think that every encouragement, inducement, and opportunity should be given to people who are able to go about their business without having to put their hands forward to seek something from the Treasury. Even at this late stage I would like the Minister to give consideration to increasing the amounts that are mentioned, in order to conform more appropriately with the situation. After all, a house built in 1957 costing $10,000 would be a palace compared with one which could now be erected for that figure.

It is only a question of the extent of the Government's guarantee. Of course, there is no more risk attached to a house costing between $10,000 and $15,000, than one costing between $8,000 and $10,000. I think I indicated when I introduced the legislation 11 years ago that experience in other parts of the world had established that when people set out to erect homes for themselves they were persons of some dependability and some substance, otherwise they would not seek to embark on such tremendous investments; if they were somewhat unreliable in certain ways, the very fact of their becoming owners of houses, though it might be in name only, seemed to have some psychological effect; they seemed to become more responsible citizens.

In addition, those in a section of the community subject to intermittent employment—I am referring to the workers who came under the conditions of the Workers' Homes Board, subsequently of course, called the State Housing Commission—were able to pay a deposit of only £50 for a house costing up to £2,500. Virtually they were guaranteed by the Government—indeed, directly financed by the Government—to the tune of 98 per cent. Yet it is remarkable that, notwithstanding their economic circumstances, few of those people fell down on their contract. Even when this did occur, in the overall operations of the Workers' Homes Board or the State Housing Commission, the Treasury experienced no loss.

However, in this case the money is provided by someone else, the margin is 5 per cent., and, of course, it takes into account the land as well as the house. Judging by trends in the last 10 or 20 years, the block of land in a few years' time will be equal in value to the cost of erecting the house. Consequently there is no danger whatever.

Therefore, as quite a number of people desire to build decent first-class homes for themselves, sometimes on sites which are sloping and require additional costs—in many cases very heavy additional costs—in the matter of foundations, and so on, surely they should, if no burden or drain is imposed on the Treasury, be assisted under legislation such as this.

I might here and now confess it was my original intention with respect to what is now the law, to provide that no limit should be imposed. If a person wants to build a house costing $5,000 to $50,000 and he is borrowing normally and he is responsible for 30 per cent. of the money, what is wrong with him building the home, if he can find someone to accommodate him with a further 25 per cent., and the Government guaranteeing the person who is virtually lending a second mortgage? Of course, it could be the original lender, and there is no reason at all why there should be any increased rate of interest, because on account of the Government guarantee, there is no increased risk.

I repeat, I would seriously counsel and plead with the Minister to give consideration to liberalising the amount beyond what is proposed in the Bill. I again make the point that the scope of the measure is up to $10,000 which was the figure proposed in the legislation when it was introduced 11 years ago.

Having said that, I feel the Bill, if it becomes law, will somewhat improve the situation; but it does not go nearly far enough. I commend the Bill to the sympathetic consideration of the House.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Housing) [2.44 p.m.]: I thank the Deputy-Leader of the Opposition for his remarks on the Bill. I think he accepted credit for the introduction of the original legislation. This legislation has been given a nickname. It is known as the *Reader's Digest* Act as the original idea was expressed in a copy of the *Reader's Digest* just before the Deputy-Leader of the Opposition was appointed Minister for Housing, or during his period in office. This does not, of course, decry its value.

Mr. Davies: You do not want to believe all you read in the *Reader's Digest*. According to a survey 75 per cent. of its contents—

Mr. O'NEIL: I am sure the Deputy-Leader of the Opposition did not write this article for that magazine.

The Act has served a very useful purpose. It has provided virtually free-of-cost guarantees or free insurance in respect of loans from building societies to home builders and also in respect of advances made by financial institutions to building societies.

A great deal of thought went into the determination of the maximum level of loans which may be granted. As we are changing quite considerably the concept of the Act, it was felt that a maximum of $10,000 should be the starting point for the metropolitan area and country regions. A higher level has been set in respect of houses built north of the 26th parallel; namely, $13,000.

In establishing these figures we did have regard for the level of building costs for the State Housing Commission. Currently, the commission's homes, excluding the land, are being built in the metropolitan area for between $6,500 and $7,000. In the north, of course, the figure could be as much as 1½ times, or double, that price.

We must remember that this Act is designed to help those people who may be just a little outside the eligibility limits for commission homes, and those people who are within the eligibility limits, but desire a home of a slightly better class of construction than the commission home. The original provisions were specifically designed so that a person building a relatively cheap home—namely, $6,000—could have an advance up to 95 per cent., which is a high ratio loan. It was designed more to assist those people who could afford less.

We have changed that concept in that we are allowing loans in future of 95 per cent. in all cases. This is a move towards higher ratio loans. This move has been made also by the Commonwealth in the establishment of the Housing Loan Insurance Corporation. Under that scheme a premium is paid on the loan; in other words, the loan is insured at a premium cost of 1½ per cent. of the total loan. Under that scheme advances up to 95 per cent. may be made. I believe that the Housing Loan Insurance Corporation scheme, with an insured loan, is the right avenue for those who wish to build homes with double garages and other extras which make them a little more expensive.

We have now the State Housing Commission, building societies with funds under Government guarantee, and, in the higher-cost areas, insured loans under the Housing Loan Insurance Corporation.

However, we will keep a very close watch on the level of loans. I did say, when introducing the Bill, that it has been our experience over the last 12 months that 83 per cent. of homes financed from Government funds cost between $8,000 and $10,000. Therefore, it is felt that in making the maximum loan $10,000, we will, in fact, cater for the present situation.

Mr. Graham: How could any applications have been made in excess of $10,000, when houses in excess of that amount were not permissible?

Mr. O'NEIL: That is right.

Mr. Graham: You prove nothing by that statement!

Mr. O'NEIL: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition can be assured we will keep a very close eye on the operation of this Act for the next 12 months. The concept has been changed very considerably, and I thank him for his support.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

MR. JAMIESON (Belmont) [2.52 p.m.]: I was somewhat confused when the Minister introduced the Bill, because he made much play on the fact that additional finance will be available to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board. At the time I thought that I had perhaps missed some point in connection with local government finance and that I should check on it. The more I checked, the more I became satisfied that my original appreciation of the situation was the correct one and that, indeed, there would not be an availability of finance from this source.

The Minister probably knows that most local authorities, with the exception, perhaps, of the City of Perth and the City

of Fremantle, are limited to $300,000 in their loan fund allocations. Most authorities, particularly the developing ones, have taken up the full amount of loan allocation and no further funds are available to them. Consequently, the possibility of their applying money towards the improvement of sewerage problems in the various districts is very limited indeed.

It is true that some of the more developed areas, such as Nedlands and others, may not have taken up the full quantity of their allocations. However, it is also true that in most cases sewerage is already provided in those areas and consequently they would not be interested. It is unlikely that they would be associated with giving the water board any additional financial aid although they might have additional funds which could be made available.

The second part of the suggestion is that finance should be available by means of overdrafts. Here, again, I see an immediate stumbling block in that most overdrafts granted to local authorities are on a very short-term repayment basis. The overdrafts are designed to see them through for a period of time in connection with the financing of various projects. At the most, they usually run into no more than five or six years.

If this is the case, of course they would not represent acceptable financial propositions for the water board to take over. The water board would want something which it could take over and repay on a regular loan repayment basis over a much longer period than the short-term which would be available.

This sort of finance, of course, is more appropriate to subdivision undertaken by private developers. If the developer has the responsibility, by way of condition, of developing a subdivision, then he is responsible for the drainage and, indeed, for providing some funds towards the sewering of the area. I understand this is proposed in the Lynwood area.

It would not make much sense for anybody to negotiate to take over this responsibility until the scheme was complete. By that time the water board could take it over, anyway, without recourse to the necessary legal finesse of having to take over any responsibility; because, doubtless, these projects would be built in accordance with its requirements, plans, and specifications. In all probability nobody would want to run these things. It is the business of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board to look after these things. The board is a specialist organisation.

I do not think any local authority or private developer would voluntarily choose to have the responsibility of looking after such a project. Naturally, they would be prepared to hand them over, if this was an initial condition of the development costs. This, of course, is all loaded onto the overall development costs and is paid for, in effect, by cash or by whatever other means of raising finance the developer has at his disposal.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, it would seem that this does not appear to be a very good source of finance. However, some councils, such as the Perth City Council, perhaps, could be induced to raise additional loans for the development of sewerage in certain sections and then it could be transferred—after the sewerage had been developed and the development paid for—to the responsibility of the board, which would undertake the servicing of the loans until they were repaid by means of the normal method of rating. Perhaps this would be most successful. However, it would seem that the idea is very limited indeed.

The other alternative is for the local authorities to be granted borrowing powers in excess of the $300,000 mentioned. However, if a greater loan allocation is going to be made to anybody, it would seem to me to be more simple if they made it direct to the board. If this were done, there would be no particular problems in the initial stages. They would not be confronted with the problem—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Who do you mean when you say, "they should give it to the board"?

Mr. JAMIESON: I mean the Loan Council and the Treasury. They are the bodies which make the arrangements for the amounts to be made available, no doubt on Commonwealth Treasury advice in the first place and State Treasury advice in the second place. Once advice is received that a certain amount is available, Treasury approval has to be obtained for any amount in excess of that.

As I have said, if Treasury approval is to be granted for this, surely it could be granted direct to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board, thereby enabling that board to seek the amount direct from loan sources in order to carry out improvements. If this were done it would avoid the necessity of having to negotiate with any local authority.

The Minister made much play on the fact that this is negotiated by mutual arrangement. Somewhere along the line the mutual arrangement might not be so mutual. If the board is able to do these things of its own volition, I consider it would be most desirable for it to do them in the first place.

The Minister indicated that this is a measure intended to try to help the board in its financial problems. However, in the immediate future it does not look as if the areas which most need servicing will be able to obtain it. I refer particularly to those areas with large wet patches such

as, possibly, the Canning, Melville, Bayswater, and Belmont shires. Their respective loan commitment is such that it would not permit them to raise any more money unless the Treasury gave approval for them to go beyond their set limitation.

I doubt very much whether the board will greatly triumph in a financial way from this proposal. At the same time, possibly it could be to its advantage and it would help it to overcome the problems. I do not think there is anything wrong with the Bill in that respect, as long as we keenly appreciate that we are not going to get any sewerage bonanza; that we cannot expect the whole of the metropolitan area to be sewered through the use of local government funds, because they are not readily available for the purpose at this juncture.

I mentioned that the local authorities which would have the necessary funds available would not be those which would be requiring this type of development.

I have also mentioned the provision which will enable the board to recover the cost of making good any damage done to main drains. That is a sensible proposition and naturally the board should be able to recover such costs even if a drain is affected only in part. If one of the board's drains is damaged by a developer or a builder, or someone else, such people should be responsible for any costs involved in repairing the damage.

The matter of allowing the board to acquire, or in other ways become responsible for drainage works that have been provided by private subdividers or developers is, as the Minister clearly indicated, only making legal a principle which is adopted by the board at present. It is desirable that the board should continue its operations in this regard and that it should have legal coverage for something that has been found to be worth while. It would cost the board nothing, of course, except that it would accept the responsibility for the drains, once they were completed, and the board, from there on, would continue to maintain them. The costs involved would be met by a drainage rate that would be applied to the areas serviced by the drains.

Another amendment in the Bill deals with the vexed question of apportioning the responsibility for the payment for excess water and various rates applicable to properties. I doubt whether the wisest man in the world could provide a solution to this problem. I suppose it could be easily solved if one paid for every gallon of water one used, but that is not possible in areas serviced by the board and with our present rating system. If we insist on financing our water supply service in the way we do at the moment it will always be difficult to overcome the problem that occurs with a change of ownership or a change of tenancy.

However, despite the problems that arise from time to time I believe it is the responsibility of an ingoing tenant to make sure of his position at the time he takes over his tenancy. I have had a number of cases put to me where I have had to make representations to authorities to try to iron out the situation that existed. This occurs particularly in cases where tenants have taken over dwellings half way through the rating year and all the rebate water has been used. These tenants find that from the time they take over as tenants they have to pay for their water on the excess basis.

As unfortunate as this might be, it is the only way to be sure that, firstly, the rates are paid; and, secondly, that someone is responsible for paying any excess water that is used. With State Housing Commission homes, of course, the position is not so difficult because the commission usually accepts the responsibility to a certain extent because it believes that if the outgoing tenant has been responsible for using all the rebate water then the ingoing tenant should not be held responsible for all of the excess water that is used. Accordingly, the commission assists in such cases.

However, in the case of privately-owned dwellings, where there is a changeover in the tenancy, the position is much more difficult and I can envisage the Metropolitan Water Board would have a number of problems in trying to iron out differences that could and do occur in such cases. Some people will insist that if they are in occupation for six months, and the rates have been paid, that entitles them to six months' worth of rebate water.

However, for obvious reasons, that proposition cannot be accepted, and could never be accepted because of the variation in seasons and in the requirements of different people. Some use more water than others and the amount of water used can depend on a dozen different circumstances. In my view it would be impossible to lay down a hard and fast rule as to how the apportionment should apply.

I repeat, that in my view where there is a changeover in tenancy the responsibility should be on the ingoing tenant to see that his position is protected and that the outgoing tenant has not used all the rebate water or, alternatively, is prepared to make some payment towards the quantity of excess water that may be used during the remainder of the rating year.

I think some good could come from the passing of this Bill if and when local authorities are in a position to raise the necessary finance through loans or some other avenue to carry out the works envisaged. However, the local authorities which at present need the most assistance will not be able to make use of the proposals unless the Government can assist them in some way.

I hope that before long, after the Premier has met with other State Premiers, under the guidance of Premier Askin, he will be able to make additional loan funds available to assist in providing for sewerage extensions in the metropolitan area. Even if the department could provide the main sewers the local authorities may be able to find the necessary funds, through various sources—either by way of overdrafts or the raising of loans—to build connecting mains.

However, in the overall picture it looks to be very much a responsibility of the Government through the board, and until the Government is able to arrange for the necessary loan funds—as the Premier has mentioned several times recently—I do not think we will be able to achieve very much.

Certainly, in this direction, a great deal more needs to be done because although we all know that the soil in the metropolitan area of Perth is probably more suitable than the soil in any other Australian capital city for septic sullage type sewerage systems, according to the figures our position is worse than that in the other cities. The figures given recently in the Federal Parliament show that our position is the worst in the Commonwealth. That makes our position look bad, from a statistical point of view, particularly to people overseas. It looks as though we are backward, and well behind the other cities in the Commonwealth; whereas in actual fact we are a long way ahead of Brisbane and some of the other cities.

I commend the Bill to the House and hope that somewhere along the line it will be of assistance to the board in enabling it to obtain additional finance to enlarge the service it provides.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [3.9 p.m.]: I support the Bill but I would like to make a few comments on it. I realise the State is moving in the right direction by bringing broad acres into servicable blocks on which homes can be built, but I thought the last comments of the member for Belmont were pertinent in that according to the figures a very low percentage of our urban area is sewered.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Deep sewered.

Mr. RUSHTON: This can be readily understood when one looks at the overall picture and realises that in many areas septic tank systems are used.

Some other cities have been built on land which is not suitable for septic tanks, and this is inclined to give our figures a rather dramatic low. At the same time I feel we would all agree that the question of bringing more and more land onto the market for the purpose of home building will be considerably helped by the issues before us at the moment.

I would like now to pay credit to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board for the very effective and positive manner in which it goes about its business. Any member who has had dealings with this board will agree that the service we receive through its general manager is positive, courteous, and effective.

The board certainly has many calls on its time, and I might say that I have made frequent requests to it and these have always been met. I can well recall the tremendous application and zeal shown by the general manager on many occasions to even the smallest problems. These problems might appear small in the whole complexity of the service, but they are not viewed as such by the general manager and his staff.

For example, we have such a problem in the Wungong area where we need services for 28 homes a short distance from Armadale. The gentleman to whom I have referred has been giving a great deal of close attention to the matter, and it will certainly be my constant endeavour to get this service extended. I merely give this as an illustration of what a pleasant down-to-earth approach the General Manager of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board has when dealing with such problems.

I am sure we will all agree that no man has greater demands made on his time and energies, particularly when they relate to increasing and enlarging the services which come under his control.

While the harnessing of loan funds might not bring a tremendous amount from local government, it could be another avenue of approach. The increased loan allocation which may be made to local governments could be harnessed when the time was opportune.

I would, however, prefer that the loan allocation be made to the water board out of which it could create a fund, and by working side by side with private enterprise it could achieve speedy results in the servicing of much of our land. I would go a step further and suggest that we need to harness our finance in another way for the purpose of servicing this land.

I would like to illustrate this position and show exactly what is being attempted by the Bill. In my electorate, particularly at the southern end of the corridor between Armadale and Canning, we have excellent residential land. Unfortunately, however, a large proportion of this land requires to be deep sewered; it requires effluent disposal treatment, and until we get this service it will not be possible to make blocks available quickly for home construction.

In one development scheme which is before us at the moment, as many as 400 blocks could be involved. These are being kept off the market until we are able to sort out the question of deep sewerage

No-one questions the necessity or the desirability to bring deep sewerage to these blocks, nor does anyone question the attitude of the local authorities that have the responsibility of making these decisions. One does, however, seek a speedy sorting out of the problems that confront developers in an endeavour to bring such blocks onto the market.

The decision being taken at the moment will enable the water board to institute a scheme to permit developers to see whether they can raise the funds required to implement this work quickly. Naturally, the water board will take over the control of the necessary works.

There is only one question I would like to raise in connection with this matter, which is that by the developers providing the funds and carrying out the work the tendency will be to pay for a service today which could last for a very long time. To my mind it is an inflationary trend and one to which I would like to see greater thought given to enable something to be worked out on the basis of a longer term.

Instead of applying to the blocks today the entire cost of the capital works, we should spread it over a period of time, and this would affect the entire rating structure.

When I consider the corridor development which is to come before us shortly, I realise that our greatest problem is to bring the scheme to fruition so that the end result will be that the homes on the land will be serviced. I understand from Press reports that the Government is making a move in the Medina-Calista area with a view to servicing the land in question. This is the sort of thing we need for the handling of the proposed corridor development, so that it will be serviced effectively.

The departments concerned have very successfully met the challenge which is before them, but I think we could well consider creating a permanent co-ordinating servicing authority along the lines of the transport authority; because I believe this is one of the most challenging issues with which we are confronted—it is one on which we want a result quickly.

I do not believe the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board should be charged with the full task; nor do I believe it should be the task of town planners, the health authority, or the local authority. If we could gather these bodies together in a co-ordinating servicing authority we could then work out a blueprint for the servicing of the area.

I have added these extra thoughts to the debate to illustrate that what is being done is a move in the right direction. I have shown that we are receiving the maximum results possible from the departments and they are doing the job for which they were created. The most challenging issue before us, however, is the servicing of the many acres of land we are seeking to bring into urban development. A co-ordinating servicing authority would go a long way towards attaining the end result for which we are all looking—that is, the bringing of urban land more readily and quickly onto the market. I commend the Bill to the House.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [3.20 p.m.]: First of all I would like to comment on the remarks of the honourable member who has just resumed his seat. Like him, and other members, I agree that the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board is doing an excellent job. I am sure the experience that the honourable member and I have had in our dealings with that board is also shared by other members.

I would not agree with the member for Dale that we need a further planning authority. Goodness gracious me, we have enough bodies and boards now, particularly with a Government that says it believes in free enterprise! I do not know what free enterprise means, but with this Government we have seen the setting up of no end of boards and authorities. There are the State Electricity Commission, the Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board, and various other authorities. These authorities deal with matters in their own right, and they can liaise with other Government departments. I believe that anyone who today requires a subdivision or who wants to complete a subdivision must set aside a considerable amount of time in which to run between Government departments.

Mr. Rushton: He would need only to go to one.

Mr. DAVIES: I cannot see how any one department could be concise enough in its function. One department would never be able to attend to all the queries that came to it without there being a considerable delay. Members know the time it now takes to get information from, say, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board, or the State Electricity Commission. One authority would have to do the job of all these authorities, as well as those of other Government departments in order to obtain approval for something.

The idea of the honourable member might be well meaning, but I do not think it is practicable to have one board which would be able to say, "Yes" or "No." It is a nice thought, but quite impracticable. I would hate to see the Government set up another authority to impose further controls and restrictions on the population, inasmuch as people would need to obtain approval from that authority.

Mr. Rushton: It would remove any restrictions and bottlenecks in getting land onto the market.

Mr. DAVIES: I cannot imagine how it would be done, but perhaps at a later stage the member for Dale may be able to develop his thought further. We have quite a number of specialised authorities at the present time, and it is proposed that this authority would have to take over their functions—and it would be physically incapable of doing so.

I think members will commend the Government on the principle contained in this amendment to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act; and that is all we are discussing at this period of time—only a principle—the bare bones of what is proposed. I say this, because the Minister, when introducing the measure, did not give us—probably he was not in a position to—very much detail as to the amount of money that will be involved if this principle is adopted. Perhaps he has some figures as to the estimated loans that can be taken up, or the amount of money that will be available. Furthermore, he may know the estimated cost to the board for servicing the loans and overdrafts which are taken up each year.

It would be interesting to have this information, as it might give us some indication as to how the board's desperate position in regard to finance can be assessed. I do not know whether the servicing of these loans or the meeting of the charges will make any serious inroads into the amount of money now available to the board. Perhaps the Minister can give us some indication of this.

Obviously, before the measure was introduced to this House, some circumstances must have been advanced to the board which prompted the idea; and we do not know whether it is going to be used extensively. As I have already said, we do not know the amount of money likely to be available to the board, the cost per annum to the board, or the extent to which the board's funds will be eaten into. No one can deny that the State Housing Commission and other Government departments have insufficient funds, but the State Electricity Commission seems to be one institution that does not suffer a very great shortage of money. Perhaps the S.E.C. may do its financing in a different way from that of the board.

The fact remains—and this is well known in Parliament—that for several years there has been an acute sewerage problem in Western Australia. The member for Belmont suggested earlier that Perth is not as badly off in this connection as is Brisbane. I am unable to say whether that is so, but I would draw the attention of the House to an article in *The West Australian* of the 28th August which dealt with the sewerage problem. According to this article the latest estimates are that 47 per cent. of Perth's population is served by sewerage, 74 per cent. in Sydney, 73 per cent. in Melbourne, 57 per cent. in Brisbane, and 98 per cent. in Adelaide.

The member for Belmont suggested that Brisbane may be worse off than Perth, but from the figures I have quoted, this would not appear to be so. It would seem that Perth is far worse off than any other city in Australia in regard to its population being connected to deep sewerage.

Indeed, from 1964 until the present time, the percentage of connections to deep sewerage has dropped from 49 per cent. to 47 per cent. We all sympathise with the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board in regard to this problem; and every time I have spoken to the general manager in regard to an extension he has said the board would be pleased to do it if it had sufficient money. He also said the board would appreciate it if members took the opportunity to bring the matter of additional finance up in the House so that it could be made available for water supply, sewerage, and drainage.

However, there is no need for members to do this, because I am certain the general manager and the board can quite forcibly bring to the notice of the Government the need for additional funds.

Whilst we have been fortunate in this State inasmuch as many homes can be equipped with septic systems, there is a growing problem in many of the suburbs which have been established over a number of years, where the septic systems are starting to break down. The owners had expected that by this time their properties would be connected to the deep sewerage. I refer particularly to areas in Lathlain and East Victoria Park which have been established some 10 to 15 years, and, in some instances, longer. We now find that in some areas there is no indication as to when connections will be made; and the answer I was given when I made inquiries of the Minister—he was good enough to table a map showing areas already served by deep sewerage—was that it would depend on forward planning.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I understand that modern detergents do not shorten the life of septic tank systems.

Mr. DAVIES: There seems to be some doubt about this. I believe soap powders can seriously affect the systems if used in excess, but detergents tend to help, because of their different action. Soap powders have a clogging action, whereas detergents have a dissolving action, but most people with septic tanks soon become aware of what can happen in this regard and take every precaution.

Many of the houses in the areas I have mentioned have been serviced by their own septic systems for many years and the

owners are finding that the systems require regular servicing, and additional wells have to be dug. When existing wells are cleaned out completely it is often necessary for new brickwork to be put in.

Mr. Lapham: Almost without exception, they breed mosquitoes.

Mr. DAVIES: I had not considered the aspect of mosquito breeding, but this could be quite understandable because of the very nature of the septic tanks and the manner in which mosquitoes breed. I am sure the Minister has read the editorial which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 28th August. This only highlights the desperate position in which we find ourselves.

I think this particular department has possibly been overlooked. I suppose that every Minister wants as much money as possible for his department, and although this department does not claim a great amount of glamour, it is certainly one which requires extra money. So, I point out to the Minister—if it is not already known—that not only will we have to deal with the new areas, but we will have problems with the existing systems which are breaking down.

I am disappointed that some areas only three miles from the Perth Town Hall are not sewered. A start was made at Lathlain, some three years ago, but the residents of several streets have been left lamenting because those streets have not been connected, and it appears they will not be connected for some time. I will bring this matter up, from time to time, to remind the Government that this area needs attention.

One of the matters contained in the Bill deals with the right of the Government to take over the drainage provided in a subdivision. I am pleased to see that there is no allowance for compensation, although the people who bought the blocks have already paid for the drainage. I do not know whether it is reasonable that they should be compensated. When an area is subdivided, the tendency these days is for a service such as drainage to be provided. It all goes back to the person who acquires the block of land. The charges are going up all the time, and I recently heard of a new subdivision where the blocks of land cost $4,750 per quarter acre. That is an exorbitant figure, but as the land is within 10 miles of the city, in a few years' time it will probably be worth twice as much.

Another amendment refers to the payment for excess water. I am sure that every metropolitan member has approached the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board on more than one occasion with a complaint regarding tenants who have shifted into a house and suddenly found themselves presented with a bill for $20 or $30 for excess water. In many instances the tenants have only been in a house for a month or six weeks. I think the Government has done the only thing possible by allowing the board to apportion the cost of the excess water, and to say how much shall be paid for by each owner, or occupier. This has been done on a fairly well established formula over the years, and I think it is just as well to make it legal. The other night the Government was not prepared to put something into an Act to make something quite clear, but it has taken the opportunity on this occasion to make the position clear.

There could be some heartburning regarding the rating, but this gets back to the same principle of the payment for excess water, and there is very little else the Government can do. If the Minister has any information regarding the amount of money which will become available in the future, I would like him to give me some details. I support the Bill.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [3.35 p.m.]: I feel disposed to say a few words in connection with this matter. I am pleased the Government is doing something in an attempt to overcome the difficulty, but I fail to see how what is contemplated will be very helpful. It can only be on a small scale that advantage of these amendments can be taken.

I am concerned with the overall position and I think that in the future we will be advised we have some public health hazards in the metropolitan area which must receive attention that is different from the spasmodic way things are done at the moment. I think every member in the House would agree that the metropolitan sewerage scheme leaves much to be desired. As the member for Swan, I have had some remarkable experiences in the last two or three years, and I will illustrate one of them.

I picked up *The West Australian* one morning, about two years ago, and found that overnight the various departments had put a blanket ban on the subdivision of approximately 2,000 acres of land on the perimeter of Midland. Now, 2,000 acres holds a potential for 8,000 residences. It was said that the area was not suitable for septic tanks. This decision upset the planning of quite a number of people with regard to subdivisions.

Only in the last week or two I have asked whether this blanket ban still prevails over the 2,000 acres. I have been told that it has been lifted in the Greenmount and the Helena Valley areas. This is because of the fact that the subdivisions in those areas contain half-acre blocks, and septic tanks are allowed. However, the blanket ban still prevails in Swan View.

Some developers are very keen to make money, and at the same time they are very keen to have the Swan View area

subdivided. I understand that the planners intend to install what might be called, "small sewerage schemes." I think I saw some reference in this morning's paper to the effect that the Secretary of the Mundaring Shire Council indicated that some of these sewerage schemes could be operating in the Mundaring Shire area. I believe that even if they are operating, their operation could be a costly process, and it could only be on a temporary basis. The way the metropolitan area is developing at present, I feel something more concrete is required in regard to the problem of sewerage.

Within the last week or two a man who wanted to construct quite a substantial caravan park on the fringe of Midland approached me. His problem was to have suitable sewerage connected to the caravan area, and I made arrangements for him to see the general manager of the sewerage department to see if the problem could be overcome.

I know of some land in the same area which has been held up for the past two years because it was considered that the area was not suitable for septic tanks. However, almost next door there are two other areas which have been developed. They contain anything up to 15 or 20 homes, and, ultimately, could contain 30 or 40 homes. For the benefit of the Minister, I would point out that I am speaking of the Middle Swan and West Middle Swan areas, and septic tanks are being installed. Ultimately, the areas will be very densely populated and as the clay is quite close to the surface I believe the septic tanks could eventually become a health hazard.

A few years ago I was called, as the member for Swan, to an area known as the Balfour Street area, which is near the racecourse at Swan View. The State Housing Commission had put in a lot of septic tanks in this area and, believe it or not, when toilets were flushed effluent came up in the back yards because the clay soil could not absorb the water quickly enough, and the effluent could not get away. That is a shocking thing. It was only five or six years ago, and if we are going to have this sort of thing in Swan View, Middle Swan east, Middle Swan west, Helena Valley, and Greenmount, I do not know what the ultimate outcome will be.

I hope the Minister and his departmental officers will approach the Commonwealth Government to try to obtain something in the nature of a special grant to overcome this difficulty. I have said for some time—maybe 12 or 18 months—that the blanket ban on the subdivision of over 2,000 acres has continued in the Swan View, Greenmount, and Helena Valley areas, and it is most unjust to the developers, the town planners, and the business people of the Swan electorate, who cannot see why they should be singled out.

I know this problem does not exist only in my own electorate; I have read about the problem at Melville, and I have heard about the problem in the Rivervale and Riverton areas. It looks to me as though something more than a temporary measure should be attempted to overcome the difficulty.

I do not know whether the Commonwealth Government could be prevailed upon to give us a special grant, but I do think something should be attempted; otherwise the problem could endanger health, which is most undesirable.

There is another angle to this matter and that is the extension of the sewerage into the eastern districts. About four years ago—it might have been five—I made some inquiries at the sewerage department regarding the extension of sewerage into the South Guildford area of the Swan electorate, and I was told it could take years and years.

The department said the sewerage would have to come through the Rivervale and Belmont areas and it could be many years before it arrived at South Guildford. In the meantime, quite a lot of houses have been built along the riverside in South Guildford and some establishments employing something like 50 to 100 employees have been built in the area. Generally speaking, there has been a fair amount of building taking place, and yet we are told it will be years and years before the sewerage scheme reaches the area.

I do not know whether some years ago a priority list was arrived at which has caused the delay, but I would point out that some of the residents in South Guildford have been there for 50 or 60 years. The people in the sewerage department said to me, "Well, we have got to get places like North Beach and other areas sewered before you can be fixed up." However, as far as I can recall, North Beach and other beach resorts have been developed only in the last 25 or 30 years; yet people who have been living in South Guildford for 50 years and longer are told it could be many years before they will receive sewerage. I am only mentioning these matters for the information of the Minister so that he will know what a big problem is developing around the eastern suburbs, to say nothing of Melville, Riverton, Gosnells, and other areas.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.3 p.m.

Mr. BRADY: Before the suspension I was about to discuss the possibility of the Government appointing a committee to investigate how far this sewerage scheme will extend, and what is required of it. In my opinion a feasibility committee could be appointed to inquire into what is involved; what money will be required; and the source from which it will be obtained. I mention this because I do not know what will happen if the money cannot be obtained.

The position is becoming serious, and I do not think people should continue to carry on in the casual way they do now by installing septic tanks whilst others who have been residing in old established areas have to wait for periods up to 18 months or two years for sewerage connections, as has occurred in my electorate.

The problem is acute not only in the districts of Lynwood, Melville, Riverton, and Rivervale, but also in the districts of Hazelmere, Eden Hill, and Morley Park, and sooner or later some steps will have to be taken to solve the problem. This is why I showed my concern the other evening after the Premier had made a Press announcement that possibly 500 homes would be built in the vicinity of Kwinana. I said I considered it would be wrong for services such as electric light, water, roads, and sewerage to be provided in a new town when people in older areas had been waiting for years for a decent sewerage scheme.

I commenced my remarks by saying that, in view of the apparent health hazard, hardly a day passes without there being seen in the local Press some reference to road boards warning the people within their jurisdiction that only certain contractors may remove the effluent from septic tanks and arrange for its disposal. Already there has been some trouble over contractors disposing of the effluent in unauthorised places. This is a serious state of affairs and I believe that if the overall position could be examined it could probably result in an easing of the work of other Ministers.

I know that about 12 months ago a man in Greenmount was desirous of getting a subdivision of his block, but his application was refused on the ground that the area was not served by sewerage and it was considered that the installation of a septic tank system should not be encouraged. I wrote to the Minister concerned, and ultimately his officers, after inspecting the area, granted the application to subdivide. I do not think we should reach the position of giving special treatment to one individual in areas such as Greenmount, because these are old-established districts and the houses within them should be connected to the sewerage mains.

I support the Bill because it does go part of the way towards solving the problem, but only a small part. I am extremely concerned that if individual developers are permitted to provide their own sewerage schemes around the perimeter of the metropolitan area, whether they be at Wanneroo, North Beach, Morley Park, Beechboro, Helena Vale, or Greenmount, such a policy could ultimately prove to be very costly not only to the State, but also to the individuals who buy blocks served by such a sewerage system.

I know that as far back as 15 years ago it cost one man residing in Guildford £450 to have his house connected to the sewerage mains. I know that is a fact, because I raised the matter with the Minister in charge of the department under the McLarty-Watts Government and complained about the excessive cost to the individual. I asked that his case be reviewed for the purpose of giving him some relief, and ultimately I think he was granted a recoup of £10 or £15.

From such an example one can readily imagine, if private developers are allowed to provide their own sewerage schemes in housing estates, what a costly undertaking it will be and what an excessive amount the people who buy homes in such estates will have to pay. So I hope the Government will appoint a feasibility committee to ascertain what is required and what should be done before we have a health hazard in our midst, and before we have the health authorities telling us it is because of the large number of septic tanks being installed round the metropolitan area. I support the Bill.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Water Supplies) [4.9 p.m.]: I am indebted to the members who have spoken to the Bill. One or two of them did not throw cold water on the proposals, but rather lukewarm water. Never at any time during the speech I made to introduce the legislation did I claim that this was the open sesame towards the solution of the sewerage problem in the metropolitan area. I did not make great play on the main provision in the Bill; in fact, I stated, quite conservatively, what I thought its value would be. Perhaps at a later stage I could enlarge on what I said and speak more along the lines suggested by the member for Victoria Park.

Local authorities are granted an allocation of up to $300,000 annually for their loan works. A local authority can exceed this figure with the approval of the State Treasury; and, indeed, some of the local authorities avail themselves of this opportunity. If a local authority can persuade the Treasury that its plans are necessary in the light of the rapidly developing area, the Treasury may grant the authority some increase in excess of the statutory allocation of $300,000.

Of course, any amount that is granted in excess of that figure is drawn from the general pool allotted by the Loan Council for semi-Government and local authority allocations. So it could be a case of Peter robbing Paul in view of the fact that some local authorities do not avail themselves of the total allocation of $300,000 annually.

It is true the Bill goes only part of the way. The Government has approved the Bill, because it considers it should try to take every step possible to get whatever

money it can for sewerage works. It is appreciated—and I appreciate it more than any other member present—just how closely involved some local authorities are with development works within their own areas and how the cost of some works can exceed the allocation of $300,000. However, there are quite a few that do not, and it should be borne in mind that even those local authorities that have exceeded the $300,000 allocation will, on the complementation of this legislation, be enabled to take an even broader view of the development of their regions.

As the member for Belmont said, there may not be an immediate advantage for some local authorities, but in the slightly longer period a substantial benefit could be gained by them, because each local authority must look to its own list of priorities. The Commonwealth Government sets a list of priorities in its works programme; the State Government has its list of priorities, and it endeavours to allocate money to local authorities according to how it views the need. The same applies to local governments, and in a rapidly developing country there is no doubt there is an insufficiency of loan funds, and any endeavour we can make to secure unused loan funds for worthwhile purposes should be made; and I think that is why all members who have spoken so far have supported the Bill.

I say once again that there are limitations to the principal clause, because it does not go as far as we would desire; it does not make available as much money as we would like in order to undertake all those mammoth tasks of which the member for Swan spoke. The serious problem of sewerage is not one which will be attached to this Government alone. Every Government in the future will have to face the problem. It is strange that, whilst in some respects we are fortunate in having, in the main, a sandy soil in the metropolitan area which is suitable for residential development because septic tank installations can be installed more cheaply and more rapidly than in other soils, at the same time this has, in the past, restricted the loan allocations to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department, and, in more recent years, to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board.

One or two members spoke about the need to obtain more funds for the central body, the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board. They can rest assured that this aspect has been pressed home at every opportunity by myself and by the board, as well as by the Minister for Health and his department. I am hopeful that this year we will see a sizeable increase in the allocation that is to be made to the water board.

Mention was made by the member for Belmont about the short-term type of loan, or the overdraft loan. It is true this type of loan will only be taken over when there is mutual agreement between the local authority and the water board as to the terms and conditions, and the economics of the particular area which is to be developed.

This is important. In this attempt to assist, it is not envisaged that there will be a great scheme undertaken or great sewerage mains extended, but rather that an effort will be made to develop minor extensions to the scheme, as outlined by a deputation led by the member for Ascot which waited on me.

At this juncture I might make reference to some of the remarks of the member for Victoria Park. He commended the loan provision in the Bill and asked whether I could supply some details of the loan money available; and he inquired about the ability of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board to service the loans.

I began by speaking about the details of this aspect, and I reiterate that the work which will be done by harnessing the unused allocations of loan funds of local authorities will be on a comparatively minor scale. For example, assume there is an area which has recently been built up and which needs attention. The local authority concerned might say that by the expenditure of $200,000 the required work could be done; and this work might not fall into the programme of works of the water board for some years. If the local authority could arrange its loan programme of works for $200,000 over, say, two or three years, then that work could be commenced, providing there was mutual agreement between the board and the local authority. This is the sort of work the details of which the member for Victoria Park was seeking.

In regard to the ability of the water board to service the loans, it has, and it will continue to have, the ability to do so, particularly if the extensions to which I have referred are economical extensions and will pay their way. The trouble is the availability of loan funds. Let us get back to this fundamental. This is the real problem. Of course, a sewerage extension to one or two houses in a remote area cannot be envisaged at this stage, because such a scheme would not pay its way. The people concerned must wait until there is a general build-up of the area. This is unavoidable, in the interests of the ratepayers generally and of the economic use of loan moneys.

In his contribution, the member for Dale asked one question which related to the appointment of a committee to co-ordinate the activities surrounding development. That is tangential to the problem in hand. I do not feel that I can comment on this question fully at this juncture, but in regard to its application to the activities of the water board, such a committee is not necessary for this purpose. It might be necessary in the field about which the honourable member has spoken.

I would like to refer to the remark made by the member for Swan in which he was gently critical of the proposal in the Bill and said it was on a small scale. I say again that this piece of legislation is not a spectacular means for solving the overall problem. I would like to point out to members that anyone who feels highly critical of small package sewerage plants should think again of the circumstances in which we are placed at the present time. As the water board and I see it, the small package sewerage plants are the only answer to development. The amount of money involved in trying to extend deep sewerage to all the places at the one time is beyond the capacity of the State.

Mr. Tonkin: Who is asking you to do it at the one time? Why not do it in stages?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: This work is actually done in accordance with a plan, as best we can. The Leader of the Opposition knows a good deal about the situation, because he was the Minister for Works for quite a period. The continual aim is to secure enough money to push out the deep sewerage as rapidly as possible. I said previously that this year we might see a substantial increase in the amount of funds allocated for sewerage purposes.

Mr. Toms: Is the map which shows the sewered areas and which is attached to the annual report correct?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The annual report is correct.

Mr. Toms: There has not been much alteration in the last four years in respect of the areas covered by sewerage.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: There has not been sufficient money available to cover sewerage requirements. The extension of deep sewerage is certainly desirable, but to overcome the backlog associated with this matter in a short time is virtually an insoluble problem.

Mr. Davies: Are there any changes in the method of treatment? Does the department follow this up according to world trends?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Yes; the department does keep abreast of the developments in sewage treatment. Although my knowledge of treatment works is necessarily limited and is confined to that of a layman, I did take the opportunity, when I was in England as a guest of the British Government, to inspect a number of sewage treatment plants, in order to see how the work was done in that country.

The sewerage systems in Western Australia stand well in comparison with those in England. Indeed, our conception of sewage treatment, generally, is rather in advance of what takes place in the United Kingdom; because in many of the towns there, raw sewage is discharged into the sea. Treated waste waters from sewerage works are even discharged into rivers like the Thames and the Dee. The River Dee is famed in song and story; it rises in Wales, and its waters serve the people of Liverpool and districts for domestic purposes. Further down the River Dee, pumping stations are established to draw out water, to treat it, and to reticulate it for domestic use.

I conclude by again thanking members for their interest in this Bill, and I hope it goes some way in assisting us to overcome the problem in hand.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

COAL MINERS' WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

MR. JONES (Collie) [4.27 p.m.]: The Minister, when introducing the amending Bill, briefly traced the history of the Coal Miners' Welfare Act. He gave the reason why the Government of the day introduced the original legislation; it was a means to provide moneys for amenities for the mine workers in Collie. In fact, the legislation was copied from Federal legislation, and particularly from the legislation of New South Wales.

Whilst I support the measure before us, I suggest that while the Government is looking at this legislation it might go a stage further into the question of the source of revenue for the fund itself. It will be remembered that as a result of the Bill which was introduced in 1947 a sum equal to 1½d. per ton of coal produced has been paid by the mining companies into a central trust fund under the jurisdiction of the Coal Miners' Welfare Act; and then a committee comprising principally the Senior Inspector of Mines, the President of the Collie Miners Union, and the President of the Combined

Coal Mining Unions, has administered the provisions of the Act in relation to amenities, which were generally requested by the people in the Collie district.

The contribution of 1½d. per ton has been in existence since the Act was first introduced; and, with the increase in costs as time has gone by, it will be seen that today such a contribution does not go as far as it previously did. Perhaps the Government might have taken this aspect into consideration when it dealt with this legislation.

I support the measure. I think it would be true to say that the Act provides for the moneys of this fund to be used specifically for the purpose of supplying amenities to the mineworkers.

While I do not take umbrage at the board's activities in Collie since the introduction of this Act, I do consider it might be true to say that it has been working outside its jurisdiction inasmuch as it has been making money available for projects in the community. These have included swimming pools, infant health centres, sporting bodies, and schools which, in my opinion, do not strictly come within the scope of the definition of a mineworker.

However, this amending legislation will undoubtedly clear up the position and allow the board legally to make available as it sees fit money for amenities within the Collie district.

The Minister mentioned that he had made land available to the Silver Chain committee in Collie, of which I happen to be the president. Following a deputation I led to the amenities board, the Minister of the day has seen fit to introduce legislation to permit money to be made available for the purpose of assisting in the erection of an aged persons' home in Collie.

When introducing the Bill in the Legislative Council, the Minister for Mines mentioned that Collie had already raised $10,000 towards the project. For the sake of the record I point out that the figure raised is rather in excess of this amount. Since last November a very active committee has been at work and to date $23,000 has been raised. It is hoped that within a short time tenders will be called.

It would be true to say that since the welfare fund was established, retired miners who battled for the introduction of the appropriate legislation have received very little benefit from the fund. I am not criticising the way in which the fund has been administered in the past, but it is true that little benefit from it has accrued to the older generation or the retired miners in Collie. It is considered that by making money available from the fund for the erection of an aged persons' home in the town, these retired miners will receive some benefit from the legislation they prompted the Government of the day to introduce.

I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, with the one exception to which I have already referred; that is, I would have liked the Government to go a stage further and increase the levy for the fund in order that the revenue would be increased. The Government has not seen fit to take this action, but perhaps on some future occasion it will give consideration to the suggestion. I commend the Bill to the House and give it my full support.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse — Minister for Lands) [4.33 p.m.]: This Bill was designed to meet special circumstances, and I would like to commend those who may benefit from the scheme for their willingness to co-operate in an enterprise which will help finance homes for the aged. I believe a no more commendable objective could be considered, and I therefore thank the member for Collie for his support of this Bill.

Other legislation relating to this fund is a matter for consideration by the Minister for Mines, my colleague in another place, and I have no doubt the member for Collie will make direct representations to him in this regard. I would like to say again that I hope the project for the provision of homes in Collie by the Silver Chain will soon be completed. People are becoming very conscious of their responsibility to the aged and I consider it wonderful that aged people can be accommodated in their own environment and in the district in which they have lived for so many years.

It has been the Government's pleasure, and mine as Minister for Lands, to make land available in many centres for homes for the aged. The member for Collie will recollect that some controversy occurred over the land in Collie. It had originally been reserved for public buildings, and the request for the land to be made available for homes was at first refused. At the request of the former member for the district I visited Collie and decided that the land could be more beneficially used for the purpose of homes for the aged than being retained *ad infinitum* for public buildings which might never be erected. The result of the negotiations that followed reflects credit on the Silver Chain organisation in Collie and the then member for Collie, who was instrumental in bringing about the decision I made at the time. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

ILLICIT SALE OF LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.38 p.m.]: This Bill, in my view, is indicative of sloppy thinking on the part of the Government. I say that advisedly, because all the Government has done is to accept a situation which was imposed on Western Australia by our predecessors 55 years ago. Without analysing whether what was done was right or wrong, the Government has merely proposed that certain penalties be increased.

A reading of the debates which took place in 1913—before the majority of those in this House were born, incidentally—indicates that the members who spoke at that time in support of the legislation were, very largely, concerned with a matter completely removed from what was promoted by the Minister when he introducted this legislation.

It may be a matter of interest to quote from the speeches which were made at the time, the point being that the great concern was with regard to the manufacture of liquor which, I suppose, was almost toxic in certain cases. Very definitely it would not have conformed with the requirements of the Health Act. The then Attorney-General, when speaking in the Legislative Assembly on the 5th December, 1913, said—

> It is not only that the drink is sold without a license to the detriment and injury of the community, but it is because there can be no testing or watching the kind of liquor that is sold, and the bad spirits and imperfect alcohol that are vended in some of the outback districts are not only a fraud upon honest persons, but are deleterious physically and mentally. Men have been driven to the committal of crime by the nature of the beverage they have imbibed. The want of proper quality has not only ruined health, but has ruined morals in the worst sense of the word.

The other quotation is from the speech of the Colonial Secretary in the Legislative Council on the 11th December, 1913. Among other things he said—

> The number of sly-grog shops has increased. But that is not the worst side of the evil. The drink sold at these shanties is not under the control of the inspectors of liquors and is often of the vilest description. It is helping to fill our hospitals for the insane and to provide recruits for our gaols, and it is often a source of suicide, and in some instances the cause of murder.

I do not know how exaggerated those statements were, but it is perfectly obvious that the concern of the venerable gentlemen of the time was in respect of the illicit manufacture of liquor, and because of that they imposed these penalties, which were regarded by them as being stiff and salutary in their effect.

The short address given to us by the Minister when he introduced this Bill indicates that he and the Government have in mind principally what is called the illicit sale of liquor, with special reference to night clubs. Vast changes of all sorts have occurred in the manner of life and living between 1913 and 1968, and I think it is time we got rid of some of the stuffy, old-fashined ideas which will pervade our thinking, particularly in respect of our licensing laws.

I am aware there is no-one so boring as he who has been for the first time to other countries of the world, but the experiences which it was my good fortune to enjoy not much more than two years ago demonstrated to me how antiquated we were in our outlook with regard to liquor. A great many of the problems arising from the consumption of liquor are due to the narrow-minded viewpoint which successive Parliaments have expressed or have allowed to remain in effect, because they are still in our Licensing Act.

Whilst it does not relate to this Bill, agitation exists at present with regard to the lowering of the drinking age from 21 to 18 years. In very many countries no age limit whatever exists, and there are no set hours for licensed premises.

In those countries liquor can be sold freely any hour of any day of the week in the same manner as any other beverage can be sold. Liquor can be dispensed in tea shops, restaurants, and cool drink shops. You name it, and there it is. However, because of our narrow outlook in Australia, we have developed the thought that there is something sinister, criminal, and shameful, in the matter of drinking; that he who takes alcoholic beverages is on the way to death and destruction, inevitably to become a drunkard, or to be affected by liquor to the extent that he becomes antisocial in many respects.

Hotel premises are situated in certain areas surrounded by several acres of bitumen. People must travel from the four points of the compass, and, when they have undertaken the journey, they find it necessary to remain there in order to make the journey worth while. By this method we are encouraging people to drink.

If there were places of easy access where people live, then the drink would be had when it was desired; namely, when the weather was uncomfortable, when a person

was thirsty, when he had some friends to entertain, and so on. Instead of this, we herd ourselves into these gigantic places, where there is nothing but drink and more drink and it is entirely impersonal. It is bulk handling, if you like.

The same thing applies with regard to hours. Because the hands of the clock are moving on, the rate of intake increases when the time is nearly up. Our premises close because the clock hands show a certain hour. The fact that it is hot and there is a necessity for opportunities to indulge in this type of refreshment is not taken into account.

I wish to give just one more illustration before I refer directly to the Bill. We have the shocking scene here whereby decent, respectable citizens from every walk of life attend social functions known as balls, and yet they must arrive at the balls with their arms full of bottles, carrying Eskies, lumping kegs of beer, and the rest of it. In any civilised country liquid refreshments would be available under decent circumstances. We are creating an attitude towards liquor and a certain behaviour on the part of people which is completely wrong. It derives completely from our outmoded licensing laws.

I suggest, therefore, that instead of fiddling with odd portions of the Licensing Act, there should be a complete review of the Statute. There should be a new look. I suggest that people—and there could be no people better than members of Parliament—should be allowed to see what is in operation so successfully in other parts of the world.

The intentions and purposes of the Bill are aimed, as I have stated before by mentioning the words of the Minister, principally at night clubs. This is a failure to recognise a form of social relaxation, habit, or behaviour on the part of our people. For the life of me I cannot see anything wrong with people going to night clubs or other places where they dance and eat, and where, at the same time, they are permitted to drink the liquor of their own choice. However, because of our narrow-minded legislation, any restaurant which is licensed to sell liquor can do so only until 12.30 a.m. Within half an hour no more drinking must take place on the premises, irrespective of when the liquor may have been purchased.

Mr. Tonkin: Would they not be better off in bed?

Mr. GRAHAM: Perhaps it all depends on what they were doing in bed.

Mr. Bovell: Sleeping, of course.

Mr. GRAHAM: I believe that the citizens outside of Parliament are responsible decent people in the main, and they are capable of looking after themselves without Graham and 50 others who happen temporarily to be in the Parliament instructing them as to what they should do and how they should comport themselves.

In the matter of elementary decency, and where it is a question of interfering with the rights of citizens, we have a role to fill; we have a job to do. However, these people want to enjoy themselves and they are all in those establishments for the same reason; namely, to eat, drink, dance—in fact, jollification, generally. There is nothing sinful in what they are doing; Parliament has already made provision for the people to do it up to a certain hour. If young people desire to engage in social activities until 2 a.m. or 3 a.m.—and which of us has not from time to time—I say that is their business. As parliamentarians we would be better advised to take a broad look at all those matters which have some general communal concern rather than interfere with the personal lives of our citizens.

The legislation derives from some early thoughts that there was something sinful and wicked with regard to liquor. It is perfectly true the abuse of it can lead to all sorts of social consequences. However, the great majority of people are able to conduct themselves properly.

I only wish the Bill were going further, because it would allow me to elaborate on some of the mischief-making sections of the Licensing Act; that is, those sections which are creating the problems. Once the problems have been created, our approach to them is that of a bunch of wowsers, so that penalties are increased; because we are so out of touch with reality and so out of touch with the lives of our people that we make offences of what, in other parts of the world, is common behaviour which has had no overall detrimental effect.

I have described Parliament as being wowseristic in its outlook; because wherever I have gone in Western Australia, I have found that the outlook of the great majority of the citizens is at variance with that of the members of our Parliament. Accordingly, I say that I do not view this legislation with any degree of enthusiasm, because I think it is tackling the problem from the wrong end.

I would suggest that all members are aware of the pattern of our society and of the behaviour of decent people who patronise night clubs and restaurants of one sort or another. We are encouraging an attitude on the part of our young people by declaring that what they are doing is unlawful. Consequently people are stationed at doors, admittances are paid, and liquor is sold. At least the liquor which is sold is that which is produced and manufactured under license where we can expect reasonable conditions, standards, and the rest of it. The people of 55 years ago, when this legislation was introduced, were principally concerned with a different matter altogether.

Once again, I want to admonish the Government for endeavouring to hoodwink members. We were informed by the Minister that the main business conducted by night clubs is the illicit sale of liquor, and that this is borne out by the number of convictions since the 1st July, 1967; namely, 24 convictions against proprietors of night clubs. The conclusion to be drawn from this is the Government is appalled at the increase of the incidence of illegal dealing in liquor.

The facts of the matter are, however, that for the 12 months to the 30th June, 1966, there were 87 convictions; to the 30th June, 1967, there were 68 convictions, which represents a fall of 19; and for the year ended the 30th June, 1968, there were 44 convictions, which represents a further fall of 25.

In other words, the number of convictions has actually fallen. The Minister told us that last year there was a total of 24 convictions against proprietors of night clubs. Apparently the remaining 20 were against other persons. Whether they be hoteliers or private individuals, goodness knows. We are not told that. The fact of the matter, based on convictions by the police, is that the extent of the problem is lessening. Nevertheless, we were led to believe that something had occurred which necessitated the Government's stepping in and increasing the penalties in order that they might act as a deterrent. I think the Minister stated in his remarks that this was the purpose of stepping up the fines as proposed.

My approach to this matter is that we should open our eyes, we should broaden our minds, and we should have a look to see how the other half lives. Then we should give legal sanction to something which, in my view, is not harmful but which has been created a sin by narrow-minded members of Parliament. Surely we are not right on this subject and people outside of Parliament are wrong!

The persons who patronise night clubs are not all young larrikins and ne'er-do-wells. I repeat, they are people from every walk of life. I have not been to night clubs on very many occasions, but I have been to quite a number of them at different times. To my mind it is appalling to think that the law frowns upon this activity. Because it is contrary to the law, it has an aura about it which should not prevail.

After all, Mr. Speaker, is there anything wrong with persons drinking liquor of their own choice at the annual ball of a certain organisation? Of course there is not! Is there anything wrong with people drinking refreshment of their own choice at a place called a restaurant or a night club? Of course there is not. In respect of the former, there is no limitation with regard to hours. Why should there be in respect of the latter? Public halls are not licensed. Why should there be necessity for night clubs or restaurants to be licensed?

It is true that sales cannot be made. In respect of this, if you, Sir, who are the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, wish to go to one of these places you must, unless it is possible for you to make some prior arrangement, go through the undignified spectacle of carrying several bottles with you while your good lady is in her evening dress and you are in your dinner suit. That is a practice which any member of Parliament can see any night of the week.

What would be wrong with somebody being permitted to sell the liquor in the hall itself where a person could get only as much as he wanted and would be assured that it was cool and wholesome instead of gradually getting warm in the hall? This was recognised in part when it was agreed by Parliament—with some reluctance—that the afternoon of Anzac Day was one when licensed premises could be permitted to open.

I well remember the late Commissioner of Police being wholeheartedly in support of this move for some very good reasons, one of which was that it was well known that ex-servicemen who got together that day for the purpose of parading in the Anzac Day march would buy a keg, or several kegs, to have a get-together after the parade. If there were, shall we say, 10 gallons of beer, the boys stayed and kept on drinking until the 10 gallons were consumed; it was too precious to waste, even if their needs were less.

But now, after three or four drinks, a person who has had enough at the local hotel or club is able to go home. So a good turn was done to those people, because in that matter members of Parliament showed a little more broadmindedness than others, generally speaking.

I make my position perfectly clear. I have no interest in hotels or licensed premises; I have no interest, financial or otherwise, in breweries or in those who produce wines. I am one who has a fair amount of faith and confidence in his fellow beings, and I reserve unto them the right to be able to conduct their own affairs—and I think such people are as capable of looking after themselves as I am of looking after myself.

Why should we, in 1968, give our endorsement to something which is narrow-minded and old-fashioned; something which is contrary to the ways and behaviour of so many of our people including, I venture to suggest, very many of us in this Parliament at the moment.

Mr. Jamieson: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tonkin: Could people drinking till 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning pass a breathalyser test?

Mr. GRAHAM: I would not know. Liquor is no more potent at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning than it is at 10 o'clock in the morning or at midday.

Mr. Bovell: It would be if you had been drinking since 10 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. GRAHAM: I did not suggest that. Some people, including members of Parliament here—at least by their interjections—seem to be of the opinion that if a person likes alcoholic beverage he is a drunkard, or part-drunkard, or on the way towards being one.

That is foolish in the extreme, and it merely lends emphasis to what I have been endeavouring to portray. Which of us has not been to a ball, for instance, where he may have drunk a little, or nothing, or where he may have drunk a fair quantity and afterwards proceeded to somebody's home for a cup of coffee and other refreshment? There is nothing unusual in this.

Mr. Bovell: There would be at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. Jamieson: How old-fashioned are you?

Mr. GRAHAM: It is obvious the Minister for Lands is an old gentleman of the vintage of those who passed this Act in the first place in the year 1913.

Mr. Jamieson: He is probably in the division list.

Mr. Bovell: I am not accustomed to visiting my friends at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning for coffee.

Mr. GRAHAM: Some of us are sufficiently fortunate to have friends who invite us to their homes even at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. Cash: Do they suffer from insomnia?

Mr. GRAHAM: I wonder whether the member for Mirrabooka imagines that everyone goes to bed at 9.30 or 10 o'clock at night. We have only to look at the larger capital cities of Australia—if we do not want to talk about Western Australia —to see that on any night there would be many thousands of people enjoying themselves at entertainments of one sort or another till the small hours of the morning, or till the hours of the morning that are not so small.

I do not know whether this is in the best interests of health or anything else, but this is the way of the people, and there is nothing wrong with it. I do not think it is your place, Mr. Speaker, or mine, to deliver sermons to people who want to enjoy themselves in that fashion, and, I repeat, all of us have done this from time to time.

It would appear from the bemused looks on the faces of some members that they are completely oblivious of what occurs in the greater part of the world; their minds have been completely conditioned by this narrow-minded attitude of ours as reflected by what appears on the Statute book. I only wish it were possible for members to visit other places. Those members of Parliament who see evil in drink, and who fear excessive drink, would do well to see what goes on in other parts of the world.

I am as certain as I stand here that they would return to Perth, Western Australia, convinced as I am, that a great deal of our trouble is caused because of the restrictions and restraints in our legislation. If we regarded liquor licensing matters as being a normal activity of the community, I think they would be viewed in their proper perspective by the people of this country; because I do not think that we in Australia are less civilised or less intelligent than are the people of the European countries, particularly those to which I make reference.

Mr. Jamieson: They do not need to travel. They could get a lot of this information by going out after midnight.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so; but it would be good to see the situation which actually operates in the older countries of the world. In these countries liquor can be sold seven days a week and 24 hours a day, and there is no age limit involved. I am referring particularly to Italy, where I spent two or three weeks, and where I travelled some thousands of miles.

In the whole of my travels I did not see one person affected by alcohol. The whole situation was perfectly normal and natural. There is no feeling that one is indulging in a bit of wickedness; no particular thought or emphasis is given to the matter.

But here, of course, we have created an oasis in the desert. We have bright lamps and air-conditioning, attractive barmaids, dancing, and the rest, to lure people to these places where liquor is largely served by bulk handling, if I may use that expression.

There is nothing a person can do about it because it might be many miles to an alternative place, and, having reached that place, one is likely to find a similar situation obtains there.

This is not a criticism of the hotels; it is a criticism of the system for which we are responsible—a system which has caused the present situation to develop. These quiet little taverns, or pubs, or restaurants, have none of the party celebration atmosphere where the principal purpose is to drink. One has a few drinks because one is thirsty, or one does so for a social purpose.

I want to make it clear that I am just as critical of the outlook of members on this side of the House, as I am of the

outlook of those on the other side. I do not want it to be thought that this is a condemnation of the Government only. In the case of licensing matters the approach is not on party lines; members speak according to their individual consciences.

I am pleading for a new approach, and for some new and realistic thinking in regard to this matter. As with so many other matters it is fashionable for there to be protests by youth organisations and others, only because there are so many contradictions and absurdities in the laws, and the behaviour of some people for which we are responsible; and, as a result, the people think of us in rather unflattering terms.

For this reason I think it is high time we brought ourselves up to date in respect of licensing and other social questions. I am taking this opportunity to implore the Government to do something, because it has the facilities available to it to take the necessary steps. I implore the Government to do some deep thinking in regard to the question of our licensing laws generally.

There is no question of any pioneering being done, because there are examples and proofs available in other parts of the world. We should choose the best that is in existence—something which has been established and proved elsewhere—and adapt it to suit the climate and temperament of Western Australia; and, having done so, we should see what sort of a fist we make of it.

First of all let us not fiddle around with the Licensing Act; let us tear it up. When this legislation was introduced in 1913, reference was made to horses and drays, and the rest. I notice that reference is also made to sly-grogging, as it was termed; and I am rather surprised the Minister should have used that expression.

Heavens above! This is the sputnik age; it is a time when we expect that in the next year or two a man will be landed on the moon. Yet we still tie ourselves to liquor legislation which was introduced in 1911 and 1913. This matter was approached quite differently in those days.

I suppose that you, Sir, have deduced by this time that I could not care a snap of the fingers, very largely, whether the penalty is $100, $200, or some other figure. I think the legislation is completely unreal, and the only affect it will have will be to put an extra few hundred dollars into the coffers of the Treasury. It will certainly have no real or practical effect.

The legislation reminds me of King Canute trying to hold back the waves, or whatever he tried to do! The established procedure and practice of our people is being questioned. We call it unlawful, but it is the established way of life in other parts of the world, and in those parts it is not called unlawful.

It would appear that I am of two minds whether to support or oppose the legislation, but members will be well aware that I have taken advantage of the opportunity to make some general observations with regard to our liquor laws, and I will leave the matter there.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Bertram.

House adjourned at 5.12 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 10th September, 1968

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

METROPOLITAN REGION SCHEME

Amendment to Plan: Ministerial Statement

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Town Planning) [4.32 p.m.]: Mr. President, I wish to lay upon the Table of the House a submission by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority for an amendment to the Metropolitan Region Scheme. The effect of this amendment will be to change the zoning of about 7,000 acres of rural land in the Cannington-Armadale corridor to urban.

The submission arises out of an announcement, on the 26th April last, of planning proposals for the corridor. At that time the deferment was lifted on 3,000 acres of urban deferred land. The rezoning of rural land, however, must be submitted to Parliament.

In this submission the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, which is statutorily charged with administering and reviewing the scheme, outlines the reasons for considering the land should be rezoned, and sets out the requirements it believes should be observed before development is permitted. These requirements include the need for effective drainage treatment and sewage disposal. The submission includes a report on objections which explains how these were handled, what determination was reached on each, and what were the reasons for the determination.

There were 137 objections which fell principally into two main groups: those who claimed that their land should be included in the new urban zone—of which